



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**

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Stopgap Measure Funds Department of Commerce Programs

Bridge plan includes funding for low-income heating program, workforce training, small business programs, tourism, and energy efficiency initiatives

SPRINGFIELD – The Governor and the Leaders’ stopgap funding plan, signed into law yesterday, provides appropriations for critical Illinois Department of Commerce programs including assistance for low-income households, workforce training, small business loans and export assistance, tourism promotion, and energy efficiency programs.

“This stopgap funding plan protects and sustains important Department of Commerce programs that provide services to low-income and disadvantaged residents throughout the state, and funds important economic development initiatives,” Acting Director Sean McCarthy said. “I want to thank the members of the General Assembly for working with Governor Rauner and his administration to pass a responsible bridge plan that protects our most vulnerable residents. We look forward to a balanced budget with structural reforms that help businesses grow and create jobs in Illinois.”

SB 2047 provides state and federal funding for the Low Income Home Energy (LIHEAP) program, which helps eligible low-income households pay for energy services, including winter heating. The state’s LIHEAP program serves more than 260,000 residents.

The bridge plan also includes funding for local workforce training programs, such as programs focused on employment and job training for Illinois youth in care and youth that have been involved in the juvenile justice system. These programs help prepare youth for in-demand careers. Federal funding will also be available for training and workforce development programs for participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The appropriations included in SB2047 will allow the Department of Commerce to continue to help Illinois companies grow both at home and abroad through small business loans, international marketing and export assistance.

The Department also received appropriations for energy efficiency programs such as Illinois Energy Now, which funds energy efficiency improvement projects for public sector and low-income customers, as well as an appropriation for USDA Biofuels grants that will leverage nearly \$28 million in private investment to make ethanol fuel more widely available at Illinois gas stations.

Finally, full year funding is available for Illinois tourism promotion. Illinois' tourism and hospitality industry is an economic driver for many communities, attracting visitors from around the country, generating revenue and creating jobs for Illinois residents.

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